## The Wings of the Morning By LOUIS TRACY Copyright, 1903, by Edward J. Clarks

CHAPTER IV.

ROSS the parched bones lav the stick discarded by Jenks in his alarm. He picked it up and resumed his progress along the pathway. So closely did he now examine the ground that he hardly noted his direction. The track led straight toward the wall of rock. The distance was not great-about forty yards. At first the brushwood impeded him, but soon even this hindrance disappeared, and a well defined passage meandered through a belt of trees, some strong and lofty, others quite im-

More bushes gathered at the foot of the cliff. Behind them be could see the mouth of a cave. The six months' old growth of vegetation about the entrance gave clear indication as to the time which had clapsed since a human foot last disturbed the solitude.

A few vigorous blows with the stick rieared away obstructing plants and leafy branches. The sailor stooped and looked into the cavera, for the opening was barely five feet high. He perceived instantly that the excavation was man's handlwork applied to a fault in the hard rock. A sort of natural shaft existed, and this had been extended by manual labor. Beyond the entrance the cave became more lofty. Owing to its position with reference to the sun at that hour Jenks imagined that sufficient light would be obtainable when the tropical luxuriance of foliage outside was dispensed

present the interior was dark. With the stick he tapped the walls and roof. A startled cluck and the rush of wings heralded the flight of two birds alarmed by the noise. Soon his eyes. more accustomed to the gloom, made out that the place was about thirty feet deep, ten feet wide in the center and seven or eight feet high.

At the farther end was a collection of objects inviting prompt attention. Each moment he could see with greater distinctness. Kneeling on one side of the little pile, he discerned that on a large stone serving as a rude beuch' were some tin utensils, some knives, a sextant and a quantity of empty cartridge cases. Between the stone and what a miner terms the "face" of the rock was a four foot space. Here, half imbedded in the sand which covered the floor, were two pickaxes, a shovel, a sledge hammer, a fine timber felling ax and three crowbars.

In the darkest corner of the cave's extremity the "wall" appeared to be very smooth. He prodded with the stick, and there was a sharp clang of tin. He discovered six square kerosene were empty, one seemed to be half full. and the contents of two were undid really contain oil.

"What a find." he ejaculated aloud. So far as he could judge, the cave harbored no further surprises. Returnang toward the exit, his boots dislodged more empty cartridges from the sand. They were shells adapted to a revolver of heavy caliber. At a short distance from the doorway they were present in

"The remnants of a fight," he thought. "The man was attacked and defended himself here. Not expecting the arrival of enemies, he provided no store of food or water. He was killed while trying to reach the well, proba-

bly at night." He vividly pictured the scene a a boat loud of Dyak savages, enduring manfully the agonies of hunger, thirst, perhaps wounds; then the slege, followed by a wild effort to gain the life giving well, the hiss of a Malay parang rama of land and sea, though expected, wielded by a lurking foe and the last despairing struggle before death came. He might be mistaken. Perchance

there was a less dramatic explanation. But he could not shake off his first im-

"What was the poor devil doing here?" he asked. "Why did he bury ter, which for nearly a mile seaward himself in this rock, with mining utensils and a few rough stores? He could not be a castaway. There is the indi- Irregular blue patches on the horizon cation of purpose, of preparation, of enethed combined with ignorance, for none who knew the ways of Dyaks and lars he still carried and focused them Chinese pirates would venture to live eagerly. here alone if he could help it, and if he really were alone."

There was relief in hearing his own voice. He could hum and think and act. Arming himself with the ax, he attacked the bushes and branches of trees in front of the cave. He cut a fresh approach to the well and threw the litter over the skeleton. At first he was inclined to burry it where it lay, but he disliked the idea of Iris walking unconsciously over the place No time could be wasted that day. He would seize an early opportunity to net as gravedigger.

After an absence of little more than an hour he rejoined the girl. She saw him from afar and wondered whence he obtained the ax he shouldered. "You are a successful explorer," she

cried when he drew near.

'Yes, Miss Deane. I have found wa ter, implements, a shelter, even light." "What sort of light?"

"011"

"And the shelter is it a house?" "No, a cave. If you are sufficiently rested you might come and take pos-Bession."

Her eyes danced with excitement He told her what he had seen, with reservations, and she ran on before him to witness these marvels.

"Why did you make a new path to the well?" she inquired after a rapid

"A new path!" The pertinent ques

tion staggered him. "Yes, the people who lived here must have had some sort of free passage."

He fied easily. "I have only cleared

away recent growth," he said. "And why did they dig a cave? surely would be much more simple to build a house from all these trees." "There you puzzle me," he said

They had entered the cavern but little way and now came out.

"These empty cartridges are funny. They suggest a fort, a battle." maulike her words were carelessly chosen, but they were crammed with inductive force.

Embarked on the toboggan slope of untruth, the sailor slid smoothly down-

"Events have colored your imagination, Miss Denne. Even in England men often preserve such things for future use. They can be reloaded." 'Yes, I have seen keepers do that.

This is different. There is an air of" There is a lot to be done," broke Jenks emphatically. "We must climb the bill and get back here in time to light another fire before the sun goes down. I want to prop a can-

vas sheet in front of the cave and try to devise a lamp." "Must I shep inside?" demanded Iris. "Yes, Where else?"

There was a pause, a mere whiff of awkwardness.

"I will mount guard outside," went on Jenks. He was trying to improve the edge of the ax by grinding it on a

The girl went into the cave again, She was inquisitive, uneasy.

"That arrangement"- she began, but ended in a sharp cry of terror. dispossessed birds had returned during the sailor's absence.

"I will kill them!" he shouted in an-

'Please don't. There has been enough of death in this place already." The words jarred on his ears. Then

he felt that she could only allude to the 'I was going to say," she explained,

"that we must devise a partition. There is no help for it until you construct a sort of house. Candidly, I do not like this hole in the rock. It is a vault, a tomb." "You told me that I was in com-

strove hard to appear brusquely good of his mold he was absurdly irritable. The cause was overstrain, but that explanation escaped him. "Quite true. But if sleeping in the

cold, in dew or rain, is bad for me, it must be equally bad for you, and without you I am helpless, you know."

He laughed sardonically, and the harsh note clashed with her frank candor. Here at least she was utterly oil cases enrefully stacked up. Three deceived. His changeful moods were incomprehensible.

touched. With almost feverish haste ability, Miss Deane," he exclaimed, plexity, he ascertained that the half filled tin "We must hope for a speedy rescue,

the climb?" The crest of the hill was tree covered, their immediate locality until the sailor found a point higher than the rest, where a rugged collection of hard basalt and the uprooting of some poon

trees provided an open space elevated above the ridge.

For a short distance the footbold was precarious. Jenks helped the girl in this part of the climb. His strong, gentle grasp gave her confidence. She was flushed with exertion when they stood together on the summit of this elevated perch. They could look to brave, hardy European keeping at bay every point of the compass except a small section on the southwest. Here the trees rose behind them until the brow of the precipice was reached.

The emergence into a sunlit pano was profoundly enthralling. They appeared to stand almost exactly in the pleasant one in some respects." center of the island, which was cres cent shaped. It was no larger than the sailor had estimated. The new slopes now revealed were covered with verdure down to the very edge of the wabroke over jagged reefs. The sea looked strangely calm from this height. to south and east caught the man's first glance. He unslung the binocu-

"Islands," he cried, "and big ones

"How odd!" whispered Iris, more concerned in the scrutiny of her immediate surroundings. Jenks glanced at her sharply. She was not looking at the islands, but at a curious hollow, a not far removed from the small plateau containing the well, though isolated from it by the south angle of the

Here, in a great circle, there was not the sailor deemed it to be the dried up bed of a small lake. This hypothesia would not serve, else it would be neither paid further attention to it, f r feet momentarily swept aside all other considerations.

"What a beautiful place?" murmured Iris, "I wonder what it is called." "Suppose we christen it Rainbow is

"Why 'Rainbow?" "

"That is the English meaning of 'Iris' in Latin, you know." "So it is. How clever of you to think

of it! Tell me, what is the meaning of 'Robert' in Greek ?" He turned to survey the northwest side of the island. "I do not know," he answered. "It might not be farfetched to translate is as 'a ship's steward, a

tort as a mere light hearted quibble. It annoyed her, a young person of much consequence, to have her kindly condescension repelled.

"I suppose so," she agreed, "but I have gone through so much in a few hours that I am bewildered, apt to forget these nice distinctions."

Jenks was closely examining the reef on which the Sirdar struck. Some square objects were visible near the palm tree. The sun, glinting on the waves, rendered it difficult to discern their significance.

"What do you make of those?" he inquired, handing the glasses and blandy ignoring Miss Deane's petulance. Her brain was busy with other things while she twisted the binoculars to suit her vision. Rainbow island-Iris-It was a nice conceit, but "inenial" struck a discordant note. This man was no menial in appearance or speech Why was he so deliberately rude?

"I think they are boxes or packing cases." she announced.

"Ah, that was my own idea! I must visit that locality."

"How? Will you swim?" "No," he said, his stern lips relaxing in a smile; "I will not swim, and, by the way, Miss Deane, be careful when you are near the water. The lagoon is swarming with sharks at present I feel tolerably assured that at low tide, when the remnants of the gale have vanished I will be able to walk there along the reef."

"Sharks!" she cried. "In there! What horrible surprises this speek of land contains! I should not have imagined that sharks and seals could live together!"

You are quite right," he explained with becoming gravity. "As a rule, sharks infest only the leeward side of these islands. Just now they are at tracted in shoals by the wreck."

"Oh." Iris shivered slightly. "We had better go back now.

wind is keen here. Miss Denne." She knew that he purposely misun derstood her gesture. His attitude conveved a rebuke. There was no further room for sentiment in their present ex-Istence. They had to deal with chill necessities. As for the sailer, he was glad that the chance turn of their conversation enabled him to warn her against the lurking dangers of the lagoon. There was no need to mention the devilfish now. He must spare her all avoidable thrills.

They gathered the stores from the first dining room and reached the cave without incident. Another fire was lighted, and while Iris attended to the kitchen the sailor felled several young trees. He wanted poles, and these were the right size and shape. He soon cleared a considerable space. The timber was soft and so small in girth that three cuts with the ax usually sufficed. He dragged from the beach the smallest tarpaulin he could find mand, yet you dispute my orders." He and propped it against the rock in such manner that it effectually screenhumored, indifferent, though for one ed the mouth of the cave, though ad-

He was so busy that he paid little heed to Iris. But the odor of fried ham was wafted to him. He was lifting a couple of heavy stones to stay the canvas and keep it from flapping in the wind when the girl called out: "Wouldn't you like to have a wash before dinner?"

He straightened himself and looked at her. Her face and hands were shining, spotless. The change was so "I will serve you to the best of my great that his brow wrinkled with per-

and I am inured to exposure. It is see I am already learning to help my otherwise with you. Are you ready for self. I made a bucket out of one of the dish covers by slinging it in two ropes. Another dish cover, some sand and they could see nothing beyond and leaves supplied basin, soap and towel. I have cleaned the tin cups and the knives, and, see, here is my great-

She held up a small metal lamp. "Where in the world did you find

that?" he exclaimed. Buried in the sand inside the cave."

"Anything cise?" His tone was abrupt. She was so disappointed by the seeming want of appreciation of her industry that a gleam of amusement died from her eyes, and she shook her head, stooping at once to attend to the toasting of some biscuits.

This time he was genuinely sorry. "Forgive me, Miss Deane," he said penitently. "My words are dictated by anxiety. I do not wish you to make discoveries on your own account. This is a strange place, you know-an un-

"Most certainly. It was careless of me not to have examined its interior

"Surely I can rummage about my

more thoroughly." "Then why do you grumble because

found the lamp?" "I did not mean any such thing.

em sorry." "I think you are horrid. If you want to wash you will find the water over there. Don't wait. The ham will be

frizzled to a cinder.' Unlucky Jenks! Was ever man fated to incur such unmerited odium? He savagely laved his face and neck. The fresh, cool water was delightful at first, but when he drew near to the fire he experienced an unaccountable sensation of weakness. Could it be possible that he was going to faint? quarry-like depression beneath them to It was too absurd. He sank to the the right, distant about 300 yards and ground. Trees, rocks and sand strewn earth indulged in a mad dance. Iris voice sounded weak and indistinct. It seemed to travel in waves from a great distance. He tried to brush away from his brain these dim fancies, but a vestige of grass, shrub or tree, noth- his iron will, for once failed, and he ing save brown rock and sand. At first | pitched headlong downward into dark-

When he recovered, the girl's left arm was around his neck. For one choked with verdure. The pit stare t blissful instant he nestled there conup at them like an ominous eye, though | tentedig. He looked into her eyes and saw that she was crying. A gust of the glorious prospect mapped at the'r anger rose within him that he should be the cause of those tears.

> He tried to rise. "Oh! Are you better?" Her lips quivered pitifully.

"Yes. What happened? Did I faint? "Drink this." She held a cup to his mouth, and he obediently strove to swallow the contents. It was champagne. After the first spasm of terror and when the application of water to his face failed to

restore consciousness Iris had knocked the head off the bottle of champagne. He queckly revived. Nature had only given him a warning that he was overdrawing his resources. He was deeply humiliated. He did not conceive the on the canister head.

truth, that only a strong man could do all that he had done and live. For thirty-six hours he had not slept. During part of the time he fought with wilder beasts than they knew at Ephesus. The long exposure to the sun, the mental strain of his foreboding that the charming girl whose life depended upon him might be exposed to even worse dangers than any yet encounter-

ed, the physical labor he had undergone, the irksome restraint he strove to place upon his conduct and utterances relaxation when the water touched his heated skin.

"How could you frighten me so?" dehard. You made me rest. Why didn't you rest yourself?"

He looked at her wistfully. This collapse must not happen again for her These two said more with eyes than lips. She withdrew her arm. Her face and neck crimsoned. "Good gracious!" she cried. "The

ham is ruined!" It was burnt black. She prepared a fresh supply. When it was ready Jenks was himself again. They ate in silence and shared the remains of the bottle. A smile illumined his tired

Iris was watchful. She had never in her life cooked even a potato or boiled an egg. The ham was her first attempt.

"My cooking amuses you?" she demanded suspiciously.

"It gratifies every sense," he murmured. "There is but one thing needful to complete my happiness." "And that is?"

"Permission to smoke.

"Smoke what?" He produced a steel box tightly closed and a pipe.

"Your pockets are absolute shops," said the girl, delighted that his temper had improved. "What other stores do you carry about with you?"

He lit his pipe and solemnly gave an inventory of his worldly goods. Beyoud the items she had previously seen he could only enumerate a silver dollar, a very solled and crumpled handkerchief and a bit of tin. A box of Norwegian matches he threw away as useless, but Iris recovered them,

"You never know what purpose they may serve," she said. In after days a weird significance was attached to this simple phrase.

"Why do you carry about a bit of tin?" she went on.

"I found it here, Miss Deane," answered. Luckily she interpreted "here" as

applying to the cave.

"Let me see it. May I?" He handed it to her. She could make nothing of it, so together they puzzled over it. The sailor rubbed it with a mixture of kerosene and sand. Then figures and letters and a sort of diagram were revealed. At last they became decipherable. By exercising patient ingenuity some one had indented the metal with a sharp punch until the marks assumed this aspect:



of the island," she cried. "Also the latitude and the longitude." "What does 'J. S.' mean?"

"Probably the initials of a man's name. Let us say John Smith, for in-

"And the figures on the island, with the 'X' and the dot?"

"I cannot tell you at present." he said. "I take it that the line across the island signifies this gap or canyon, and the small intersecting line the cave. But 32 divided by I and an 'X' sur- bags?" mounted by a dot are cabalistic. They would cause even Sherlock Holmes to smoke at least two pipes. I have bare-

ly started one." "It looks quite mysterious, like the things you rend of in stories of pirates

and buried treasure. "Yes," he admitted, "It is unques tionably a plan, a guidance, given to a person not previously acquainted with the island, but cognizant of some fact connected with it. Unfortunately none of the buccaneers I can bring to mind frequented these seas. The poor beg-

gar who left it here must have had some other motive than searching for a "Did he dig the cave and the well, I

"Probably the former, but not the well. No man could do it unaided."

"Why do you assume he was alone?" He strolled toward the fire to kick a stray log. "It is only idle speculation at the best, Miss Deane," he replied. "Would you like to help me to drag some timber up from the beach? If we get a few big planks we can build a fire that will last for hours. We want some extra clothes, too, and it will soon

The request for co-operation gratified her. She compiled eagerly, and without much exertion they hauled a respeciable load of firewood to their new camping ground. They also brought a number of coats to serve as coverings. Then Jenks tackled the lamp. It was a most difficult operation to open it.

Before the sun went down he suc ceeded and made a wick by unraveling a few strands of wool from his jersey. When night fell, with the suddenness of the tropics, Iris was able to Illuminate her small domain.

They were both utterly tired and ready to drop with fatigue. The girl said "good night." but it lantly reappeared from behind the tarpaulin. "Am I to keep the lamp alight?" she inquired.

"Please yourself, Miss Deane. Better not, perhaps. It will only burn four or five hours anyway." Soon the light vanished, and he lay down, his pipe between his teeth, close to the cave's entrance. Weary though he was he could not sleep forthwith.

"32 divided by 1; an 'X' and a dot," he repeated several times. "What do

they signify?" Suddenly he sat up, with every sense alert, and grabbed his revolver. Something impelled him to look toward the spot, a few feet away, where the skeleton was hidden. It was the rustling of a bird among the trees that had caught his enr.

He thought of the white framework of a once powerful man, lying there him and in you. I am hopeful-may, depths. The place was grewsome, horamong the bushes, abandoned, forgot more, confident. I thank you for what ribly depressing. Jenks broke out into -all these things culminated in utter ten, horrific. Then he smothered a cry of surprise.

"By Jove!" he muttered. "There is manded Iris hysterically. "You must for a skull and crossbones. It lies lives on the earth today." have felt that you were working too exactly on the part of the island where we saw that queer looking bald patch today. First thing tomorrow before the girl awakes I must examine that

He resolutely stretched himself on his share of the spread out coats, now thoroughly dried by sun and fire. In a minute he was sound asleep.

CHAPTER V. awoke to find the sun high in the heavens. Iris was preparing breakfast; a fine fire was crackling cheerfully, and the presiding goddess had so altered her appearance that the sailor surveyed

her with astonishment. He noiselessly assumed a sitting posture, tucked his feet beneath him and blinked. The girl's face was not visible from where he sat, and for a few seconds he thought he must surely be dreaming. She was attired in a neat navy blue dress and smart blouse. Her white canvas shoes were replaced by strong leather boots. She was quite

spick and span, this Island Hebe. So soundly had he slept that his senses returned but slowly. At last he guessed what had happened. She had risen with the dawn and, conquering her natural feeling of repulsion. selected from the store he accumulated yesterdny some more suitable garments then those in which she escaped from the wreck.

He quietly took stock of his own tattered condition and passed a reflective hand over the stubble on his chin. In a few days his face would resemble a scrubbing brush. In that mournful moment he would have exchanged even his pipe and tobacco box, worth untold gold, for shaving tackle, Who can say why his thoughts took such trend? Twenty-four hours can effect great changes in the human mind if controlling influences are ac-

Then came a sharp revulsion of feeling. His name was Robert-a menial. He reached for his boots, and Irls

heard him. "Good morning!" she cried, smiling sweetly. "I thought you would never awake. I suppose you were very, very tired. Please wash quickly. The eggs will be hard."

Lggs. "Yes. I made a collection among the trees. I tasted one of a lot that looked

good. It was first rate." He had not the moral courage to begin the day with a rebuke. She was irrepressible, but she really must not do these things. He smothered a sigh in the improvised basin which was placed ready for him. Miss Deane had prepared a capital

names and an elderly cocounut. These To his surprise he hit upon the rem- "Well, it is full of carbonic acid gas, to ter, were not so bad for a couple of castaways bundreds of miles from everywhere. For the life of him the man could not refrain from displaying the con-

versational art in which he excelled. Their talk dealt with Italy, Egypt, India. He spoke with the case of culture and enthusiasm. Once he slipped into anecdote apropos of the helplessness of British soldiers in any matter outside the scope of the king's regulations. "I remember," he said, "seeing a cavalry subaltern and the members of an

escort sitting half starved on a number of bags piled up in the Suakin desert. And what do you think were in the

"I don't know," said Iris, keenly fifteen feet, alert for deductions. "Biscuits! They thought the bags

ened them." It was on the tip of her tongue to Then you have been an officer in the ed, as if forbidden to cross a magic plied the words to his past history. army." But she forbore. She had guessed this earlier. Yet the mischieyous light in her eyes defied control. He was warned in time and pulled

"You read my face like a book," she cried.

himself up short.

"No printed page was ever so-legi ble. Now, Miss Deane, we have gossiped too long. I am a laggard this morning, but before starting work I have a few serious remarks to make."

"More digs?" she inquired saucily. "I repudiate 'digs.' In the first place. you must not make any more experiments in the matter of food. The eggs were a wonderful effort; but, flattered by success, you may poison yourself." "Secondly?"

"You must never pass out of my sight without carrying a revolver, not so much for defense, but as a signal. Did you take one when you went bird's nesting?" "No. Why?"

There was a troubled look in his eyes when he answered:

"It is best to tell you at once that before help reaches us we may be vis ited by cruel and bloodthirsty savages. I would not even mention this if it were a remote contingency. As matiers stand, you ought to know that such a thing may happen. Let us trust in God's goodness that assistance may come soon. The island has seemingly been deserted for many months, and therein lies our best chance of escape. But I am obliged to warn you lest you should be taken unawares."

Iris was serious enough now "How do you know that such danger threatens us?" she demanded.

the China sea and its frequenters." he said. "I am the last man in the world to alarm you needlessly. All I mean to convey is that certain precautions should be taken against a risk that is His mind was occupied with the signs possible, not probable. No more."

She could not repress a shudder. The lies. When the sailor's fascinated visailor wanted to tell ber that he would sion could register details he distindefend her against a host of savages guished yokes, baskets, odd looking if he were endowed with many lives, spades and picks strewn amid the but he was perforce tongued tied. He bones. The animals were all of one even reviled himself for having spo- type-small, lanky, with long pointed ken, but she saw the anguish in his skuils. At last he spied a withered face, and her woman's heart acknowl- boof. They were pigs edged him as her protector, her shield.

"Mr. Jenks," she said simply, "we are in God's hands. I put my trust in that could never reach the silent you have done, for all that you will do. If you cannot preserve me from threatening perils no man could, for you are no 'X' and dot. That sign is meant as brave and gallant a gentleman as

Now, the strange feature of this extraordinary and unexpected outburst | the theory he evolved: of pent up emotion was that the girl pronounced his name with the slightly emphasized accentuation of one who Mining operations were in full blast knew it to be a mere disguise. The man was so taken aback by her declaration of faith that the minor inci- at its vitals and smothered them by dent, though it did not escape him, was

smothered in a tumuit of feeling. He could not trust himself to speak. He rose hastily and seized the ax to island-placed there no doubt by Chideliver a murderous assault upon a sago palm that stood close at hand.

Iris was the first to recover a degree came a sensitive shrinking. Her delimental displays. She wanted to box her own ears.

With inpute tact she took a keen interest in the felling of the tree. "What do you want it for?" she inand feli.

Jenks felt better now. "This is a change of diet," he explained. "No; we don't boil the leaves or albble the bark. When I split this palm open you will find that the interior is full of pith. I will cut it out for you, and then it will be your task ing it, pick out all the fiber and finally permit the water to evaporate. In a the hut of some herce village chief couple of days the residuum will be-

boiled, is sago." "Good gracious?" said Iris. "The story sounds unconvincing, but I believe I am correct. It is worth a trial."

"I should have imagined that sage grew on a stalk like rice or wheat." "Or Topsy!" She laughed. A difficult situation had passed without undue effort. Unhappily the man reopened it. While

deavored to put matters on a straight-"A little while ago," he said, "you seemed to imply that I had assumed the name of Jenks."

using a crowbar as a wedge he en-

But Miss Deane's confidential mood had gone. "Nothing of the kind," she said coldly. "I think Jenks is an excellent name.

She regretted the words even as they fell from her lips. The sailor gave a mighty wrench with the bar, splitting the log to its clustering leaves. "You are right," he said. "It is dis-

tinctive, brief, dogmatic. I cling to it passionately." Soon afterward, leaving Iris to the manufacture of sago, he went to the leeward side of the Island, a search for turtles being his ostensible object. When the trees hid him be quickened meal. Of course the ham and biscuits his pace and turned to the left in orstill bulked large in the bill of fare, der to explore the cavity marked on but there were boiled eggs, fried bat the tin with a skull and crossbones, saw from the summit rock?" he said. nants of a roadway-that is, a line through the wood where there were no

held him spellbound. chasm, a quarry, out of the side of the this is! Yet it might be a paradise. hill. Roughly circular in shape, it had and at its deepest part, toward the continued; cliff, it ran to a depth of forty feet. On the lower side, where the sailor anything-nasty-in there?" stood, it descended rapidly for some

Grasses, shrubs, plants of every va- you were it not imperative." riety, grew in profusion down the contained patent fodder until I enlight- steep slopes wherever seeds could find me?" precarious nurture until a point was reached about ten or eleven feet from sounce on him with the comment, the bottom. There all vegetation ceas-

house. The bones of men and animals

May I?" he asked.

to be helpful. His knowledge was limited on the subject, yet Jenks believed that the material here was a bard limestone rather than the external basalt. Searching each inch with the feeble light, he paused once, with an exclamation,

"I cannot be certain." he said doubtfully. "Would you mind holding the lamp while I use a crowbar?"

In the stone was visible a thin vein. bluish white in color. He managed to break off a fair sized lump containing a well defined specimen of the foreign

came off in laminated layers, small, brittle scales. "Is it silver?" Iris was almost ex-"I do not think so. I am no expert, but I have a vague idea-I have seen"-

away the furrows with his hand, that physical habit of his when perplexed. "I have it," he cried. "It is anti-

At last his superior intelligence asserted itself. His brain became clearer, recovered its power of analysis. Ha began to criticise, reflect, and this is Some one, long ago, had discovered valuable minerals in the volcanic rock. when the extinct volcano took its revenge upon the human ants gnawing a deadly outpouring of carbonic acid

Over all lay a thick conting of fine

sand, deposited from the eddying winds

a clammy perspiration. He seemed to

be looking at the secrets of the grave.

Then there came a European who of self possession. For a moment she knew how the anhydrate gas, being had bared her soul. With reaction heavier than the surrounding air, settled like water in that terrible hollow, cate nature disapproved these senti- He, too, had striven to wrest the treas ure from the stone by driving a tunnel into the chiff. He had partly succeeded and had gone away, perhaps to obtain help, after crudely registering his knowledge on the lid of a tin canister. quired when the sturdy trunk creaked | This, again, probably fell into the hands of another man, who, curious but unconvinced, caused himself to be set ashore on this desolate spot with a few inadequate stores. Possibly he had arranged to be taken off within #

rates came first, and the intrepid exwhile his head had gone to decorate The murderers, after burying their own dead-for the white man fought hard. witness the empty cartridges searched the island. Some of them, ignorantly inquisitive, descended into the hollow. They remained there. The others, superstitious barbarians, fled for their lives, embarking so hastily that they took from the cave neither tools not oil, though they would greatly prize these articles.

Such was the tragic web he spun, a compound of fact and fancy. It explained all perplexities save one. What did "32 divided by 1" mean? Wes there yet another fearsome ridd a awaiting solution? And then his thoughts flew to Iria

was seldom absent from his brain Suppose, egg hunting, she had stumbled across this valley of death! How could be hope to keep it hidden from her? Was not the ghastly knowledge better than the horror of a chance ranble through the wood and the shock of discovery-nay, indeed, the risk of a catastrophe?

those most useful dish covers. He called to her, led her wondering to the track and pointed out the fatel

quarry, but in such wise that she could

"You remember that round hale we

not look inside it.

breathe which means unconsciousne and death. It gives no warning to the well grown trees, where the ground inexperienced. It is rather pleasant bore traces of humanity in the shape than otherwise. Promise me you will

of a wrinkled and mildewed pair of hever come near this place again." Chinese boots, a wooden sandal, even Now. Iris, too, had been thinking the decayed remains of a palki, or hit- deeply. Robert Jenks bulked large in her day dreams. Her nerves were not At last he reached the edge of the yet quite normal. There was a cate a

She bit her lip to suppress her tears; a diameter of perhaps a hundred feet, but, being the Eve in this garden, she

"How did you find out? Is there

"Are you keeping other secrets from "Oh, quite a number." He managed to conjure up a smile,

Below this belt the place was a charnel | dramatically," she said. "You never can tell," he answered.

"I wish to go inside with a lamp,

"May I come too?" she demanded. He assented, with an explanation of his design. When the lamp was in order he held it close to the wall and conducted a systematic survey. The geological fault which favored the construction of the tunnel seemed to diverge to the left at the farther end. The "face" of the rock exhibited the marks of persistent labor. The stone had been bewn away by main force when the dislocation of strata ceased

"What is it?" cried Iris,

They harried into the open air and examined the fragment with curious eyes. The saflor picked it with his knife, and the substance in the vein

fie wrinkled his brows and pressed

Miss Deane pursed her lips in dis-

mere skeletons. A few bodies-nine He countered readily. "Because I the sailor counted-yet preserved some happen to have read a good deal about resemblance of humanity. These latter were scattered among the older relics. They were the clothes of Dyaks. Characteristic hats and weapons denoted their nationality. The others, the first harvest of this modern Golgoths, might have been Chinese coo-

A horde of pigs, running wild over the nese fishers-had met the same fate while intent on dreadful orgy.

gas, the bottled up poison of the ages.

But a sampan laden with Dyak p to knead it with water after well wash. plorer's bones rested near the well come a white powder, which, when

Happen what might, her bright pletu a

He rushed back through the trees until he caught sight of Iris industrious. ly kneading the sago pith in one of

pit, and the sight that met his eyes in her throat as she answered; "I don't want to die. Of course I The labor of many hands had torn a will keep away. What a horrid island

> "Yes, the remains of animals and other things. I would not have told

> and the ruse was effective. She ap-"I hope they will not be revealed so

mingled in weird confusion. Most were | They were in prophetic vein that morning. They returned in silence to